

How to hold a charity ball, party or dinner

Get your glad rags on and raise money for Action on Hearing Loss.

Here are our top tips to help you have a great time while raising much-needed funds.

Planning your event

1 Give yourself plenty of time to plan and try not to pick a date that conflicts with important events in your community, such as a local festival, or key dates including Mother's Day/Father's Day or big sporting events, such as a World Cup.

2 It may be easier and cheaper to hire a venue on a weekday but can your guests make it? Ask if the venue offers a charity rate – many do, but don't like to promote it!

3 Get together a team and delegate key tasks; for example, sourcing auction or raffle prizes, and helping with the publicity or decor. Ask everyone to help sell the event tickets. If 10 people sell 10 tickets

each, then you have an incredible 100 guaranteed guests.

4 Contact the local press to publicise the event.



Suggested timings

Nine months and counting Set the date and recruit an events committee. Confirm the type of event, budget and fundraising ideas. Start making approaches to local companies who may be interested in supporting your event.

Six months and counting Start sourcing those lovely raffle prizes. Decide what your guests might like and approach local businesses and shops

Three months and counting Send a 'Save the Date' to your prospective guests.

One month and counting Confirm the details with the venue, such as menu, branding display, arrival and departure times. Prepare a schedule for the event and recruit lots of volunteers to help you on the night.

Two weeks and counting Confirm numbers with the venue.

4 Try to get as many things donated as possible, such as raffle prizes or even the venue.

Fundraising at the event

Here are some tried and tested ideas for raising more money while making your event extra fun.

Heads and Tails

A great ice-breaker that everyone can play for a small fee. Ask everyone to stand up and choose 'heads' or 'tails' (putting their hands on their head or bottom). Toss a coin, call out whether it is heads or tails and ask the losers to sit down. Keep going until you are left with a winner. He or she gets a set amount from the entry fee with the remainder going to Action on Hearing Loss.

A small raffle

Try displaying your prizes to whet your guests' appetites and sell more tickets.

The Golden Tree

You will need a lot of prizes for this game, but it's good fun and a great way to get everyone involved. Guests buy an envelope for a set price with details of their prize inside. There is no draw - every envelope wins a prize. If you've got lots of prizes of different values, you could tier your ticket price but don't set more than three levels or it will start to get really complicated.

Auction

You could consider holding an auction with collectable prizes, such as a signed football shirt. Keep it short and make sure you have someone hosting it who is good with a crowd. Send a list of prizes out to guests in advance of the evening and display them prominently on the night. You'll need volunteers and spotters to make sure every bid is recorded, and payment and contact details of the successful bidder taken on the night.

Spend less, make more

1 Set your ticket price based on how much it is going to cost to run the event, adding on what you think your guests will pay. Research ticket prices for similar events in your area to avoid pricing yourself out of the market.

2 Explain on your invitations, and in any publicity, why you are supporting Action on Hearing Loss - a personal story really helps.

3 When you ask companies for help, think about what you can offer them in return - publicity, invitations, or maybe branding at the event.

Party time!

The day has arrived. Here are our recommendations for ensuring it goes smoothly and you have lots of fun: -

- 1** Brief your volunteers so they know exactly what they are doing.
- 2** Keep a list of key contacts so you know whom to contact with any problems.
- 3** When you welcome your guests to the event, reinforce why you are supporting Action on Hearing Loss and what their attendance means to you.
- 4** Make sure you have enough cash for a float for cash transactions at the event (such as raffle tickets).
- 5** Try to keep track of your fundraising so you can announce a grand total at the end of the event.

The legal stuff

- 1** Keep a record of any expenses, such as printing or venue hire. You cannot claim costs for voluntary time.
- 2** Ask the venue if they have a safe you can use and make regular sweeps to ensure that volunteers are not holding on to a lot of money all night. It'll also help you keep track of your fundraising.
- 3** Always have two people when you are handling and counting money.

4 Action on Hearing Loss does not provide insurance for fundraisers' events so check whether your venue has this.

5 It is good practice to put together a risk assessment to identify anything that could cause harm on the day and think about solutions (for example, making sure first aid is covered on the day). Ask your local authority for advice.

6 If your guests are making donations, ask them if they are a UK taxpayer and happy to sign a Gift Aid declaration form.

7 Small raffles. It is important that you follow these guidelines when you organise a small raffle: -

- Tickets must only be sold, and the raffle drawn, during the event.
- No more than £500 can be spent on prizes and no cash can be given.
- All tickets must be sold at the same price (no discounts for bulk buys).
- No tickets should be bought or sold by children under the age of 16.



Thank you for fundraising for Action on Hearing Loss.

**For all your fundraising materials, please contact:
community.fundraising@hearingloss.org.uk**